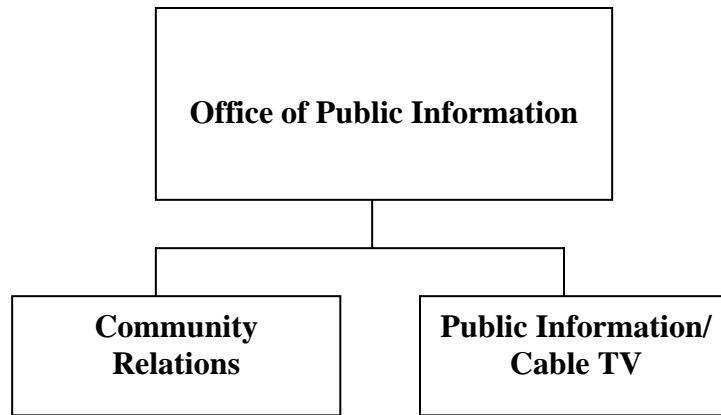


## Public Information

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## **Public Information**

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### **MISSION**

The mission of the Office of Public Information is to help the Loudoun County Government operate more effectively by providing information to the public and the County workforce, promoting effective two-way communication between the County Government and the public and encouraging community involvement.

### **DESCRIPTION**

The Office of Public Information coordinates a broad range of public information and community outreach activities for the County Government, including programs to promote effective communication with the public through the news media, County website, publications, and cable television, and responds to requests for information from the public. The Public Information Office plays a core role in disseminating information to the public to help ensure the safety of the public during actual and potential emergencies. The office coordinates internal communications activities to ensure effective communication of information within the County organization. The office oversees community relations programs to foster effective two-way communication between residents and the County Government, engage Loudoun County citizens in the governmental process, promote volunteerism by individuals and families, and facilitate community efforts to solve problems. The office is also responsible for administration of the cable television and open video system (OVS) franchises.

### **BUDGET OVERVIEW**

#### **FY 07 Issues, Challenges & Trends:**

- The Public Information Office will face the challenge of meeting the demands of a growing population for timely, accurate, complete information about County issues and programs with a staff that has been reduced by 20% since FY 04.
- The office will continue to make innovative use of new technologies to communicate with the public and the County workforce.
- The cable television administration program will oversee the enforcement of new cable franchise agreements with Verizon and Adelphia or its successor.
- In light of the high rate of population growth, efforts to communicate effectively with new residents and developing neighborhoods will be especially important.

#### **FY 07 Major Goals:**

- Increase the value of volunteer work in the community by 10%.
- Continue to enhance the quality of the Leadership Loudoun program as measured by survey of participants.
- Produce and distribute 300 news releases, resulting in over 1,200 media placements valued at over \$150,000.
- Respond to 98% of inquiries from the public and media within 24 hours.
- Continue to build on the Loudoun County Website to make it a primary source of information for residents and increase usage of the website by 10%.
- Successfully administer two new cable television franchise agreements.

#### **FY 06 Major Achievements:**

- Usage of Loudoun's online volunteer database continued to expand, greatly increasing the number of volunteer placements.
- The value of student volunteer scholarships donated by local businesses continued to increase.
- The office coordinated logistical and promotional support for community outreach efforts of the Loudoun Youth Initiative.
- The office received three national awards for the County website and annual report.
- Usage of the Loudoun County Website continued to grow significantly and more features were added.
- The office coordinated negotiations on two cable television franchise agreements as well as the transfer of the existing franchise from Adelphia to Comcast.

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## Public Information

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### Department Financial Summary

Departmental Financial Summary	FY 03 Actual	FY 04 Actual	FY 05 Actual	FY 06 Adopted	FY 07 Adopted
<b>Expenditures</b>					
Personnel	\$351,771	\$378,856	\$352,120	\$369,000	\$396,000
Operations & Maintenance	233,672	293,250	282,842	275,000	210,000
Capital Outlay	0	2,500	2,500	0	0
<b>Total Expenditures:</b>	<b>\$585,443</b>	<b>\$674,606</b>	<b>\$637,462</b>	<b>\$644,000</b>	<b>\$606,000</b>
<b>Revenue</b>					
Local Fees, Charges, Etc.	\$99,902	\$155,060	\$200,844	\$231,000	\$184,000
<b>Total Revenues:</b>	<b>\$99,902</b>	<b>\$155,060</b>	<b>\$200,844</b>	<b>\$231,000</b>	<b>\$184,000</b>
<b>Local Tax Funding:</b>	<b>\$485,541</b>	<b>\$519,546</b>	<b>\$436,618</b>	<b>\$413,000</b>	<b>\$422,000</b>
<b>FTE Summary:</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>6.00</b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>4.80</b>	<b>4.80</b>

**FY 07 Board Action:** The FY 07 Adopted Fiscal Plan for the Public Information Office provides services at the County Administrator's recommended level. Operating expenditures decline by \$53,000 in anticipation of completion of the cable franchise agreements. The FY 07 budget also includes funding for implementation of compensation increases and increased benefits costs effective September 2006.

#### **Budget History:**

FY 05: A community outreach specialist was eliminated during the budget process.

FY 05 Mid-Year: 0.20 FTE was transferred to County Administration to increase a deputy clerk support position to full-time.

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## Public Information

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### Expenditures by Program

Programs	FY 03 Actual	FY 04 Actual	FY 05 Actual	FY 06 Adopted	FY 07 Adopted
Community Relations	\$234,140	\$241,276	\$212,468	\$178,000	\$186,000
Public Information/Cable TV	351,303	433,330	424,994	466,000	420,000
Total	<u>\$585,443</u>	<u>\$674,606</u>	<u>\$637,462</u>	<u>\$644,000</u>	<u>\$606,000</u>

### Revenues by Program

Programs	FY 03 Actual	FY 04 Actual	FY 05 Actual	FY 06 Adopted	FY 07 Adopted
Community Relations	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Public Information/Cable TV	99,902	155,060	200,844	231,000	184,000
Total	<u>\$99,902</u>	<u>\$155,060</u>	<u>\$200,844</u>	<u>\$231,000</u>	<u>\$184,000</u>

### Local Tax Funding by Program

Programs	FY 03 Actual	FY 04 Actual	FY 05 Actual	FY 06 Adopted	FY 07 Adopted
Community Relations	\$234,140	\$241,276	\$212,468	\$178,000	\$186,000
Public Information/Cable TV	251,401	278,270	224,150	235,000	236,000
Total	<u>\$485,541</u>	<u>\$519,546</u>	<u>\$436,618</u>	<u>\$413,000</u>	<u>\$422,000</u>

### Staffing by Program

Programs	FY 03 Actual	FY 04 Actual	FY 05 Actual	FY 06 Adopted	FY 07 Adopted
Community Relations	3.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Public Information/Cable TV	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.80	2.80
Total	<u>6.00</u>	<u>6.00</u>	<u>5.00</u>	<u>4.80</u>	<u>4.80</u>

## Public Information - Community Relations

### DESCRIPTION

This program oversees community relations programs to foster effective two-way communication between residents and the County Government, to engage Loudoun County citizens in the governmental process, to promote volunteerism by individuals and families, and to facilitate community efforts to solve problems. The Volunteer Services program matches volunteers with community needs, recognizes Loudoun's outstanding volunteers, and promotes and recognizes student volunteers. It also provides support to the Loudoun Volunteer Services Board. The Community Relations staff coordinates the Leadership Loudoun program, which educates, develops and connects community leaders, and provides support to the Leadership Loudoun Board. The program also coordinates community meetings and forums, and supports special initiatives such as the Loudoun Youth Initiative.

### BUDGET OVERVIEW

#### **FY 07 Issues:**

- The Community Relations program will continue to coordinate the Volunteer Services and Leadership Loudoun programs, and will continue to support the non-profit boards for these programs.
- The program will also coordinate community meetings and forums as needed. It is expected that the Community Relations program will continue to provide logistical and promotional support for the Loudoun Youth Initiative.

#### **FY 07 Challenges:**

- The Community Relations staff is increasingly involved with local and regional emergency preparedness efforts and planning for the coordination of volunteers in emergency situations.
- Funding for the community outreach consultant was reduced significantly in FY 06, which will limit the number of hours the consultant can be used to plan and facilitate public forums.
- As the County population continues to grow, it will be important for the office to conduct community outreach activities to keep residents informed about local government issues and engaged in solving community problems.

<b>Program Financial Summary</b>	<b>FY 03 Actual</b>	<b>FY 04 Actual</b>	<b>FY 05 Actual</b>	<b>FY 06 Adopted</b>	<b>FY 07 Adopted</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>					
Personnel	\$147,250	\$151,730	\$124,665	\$136,000	\$146,000
Operations & Maintenance	86,890	87,046	85,303	42,000	40,000
Capital Outlay	0	2,500	2,500	0	0
<b>Total Expenditures:</b>	<b>\$234,140</b>	<b>\$241,276</b>	<b>\$212,468</b>	<b>\$178,000</b>	<b>\$186,000</b>
 <b>Local Tax Funding:</b>	 <b>\$234,140</b>	 <b>\$241,276</b>	 <b>\$212,468</b>	 <b>\$178,000</b>	 <b>\$186,000</b>
<b>FTE Summary:</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>2.00</b>

## Public Information - Community Relations

### Planned Accomplishments/Objectives for FY 07

**Goal:** Increase the number of volunteer referrals and connections.

**Objective:** Increase the value of volunteer placements by 10% annually.

<i>Performance Measures</i>	<b>Actual FY 04</b>	<b>Actual FY 05</b>	<b>Est. FY 06</b>	<b>Proj. FY 07</b>
Number of volunteer referrals and connections	1,646	2,488	2,737	3,010
Estimated value of volunteer work	\$27 M	\$37 M	\$41 M	\$45 M

**Goal:** Continue to enhance quality of Leadership Loudoun as a program for citizen education and engagement.

**Objective:** Achieve at least a 95% favorable rating by program participants.

<i>Performance Measures</i>	<b>Actual FY 04</b>	<b>Actual FY 05</b>	<b>Est. FY 06</b>	<b>Proj. FY 07</b>
Number of participants in Leadership Loudoun/Discover Loudoun programs	87	22	20	20
Percentage of participants giving favorable rating to program	N/A	100%	100%	100%

**Goal:** Respond promptly to requests for information and provide outreach activities and materials to inform and engage residents.

**Objective:** Respond to 98% of inquiries within 24 hours.

<i>Performance Measures</i>	<b>Actual FY 04</b>	<b>Actual FY 05</b>	<b>Est. FY 06</b>	<b>Proj. FY 07</b>
Percentage of inquiries responded to within 24 hours.	98%	93%	93%	98%
Number of newcomers' kits distributed	323	417	337	300
Number of participants in community forums	417	1,117*	230	200

\*A one-year increase in this measure in FY 05 is attributable to several community forums that kicked off the Loudoun Youth Initiative.

## Public Information - Public Information/Cable TV

### DESCRIPTION

This program promotes effective communication with the public through the news media, County website, and publications. The Public Information Office responds to requests for information from the public, and plays a core role in disseminating information to the public to help ensure the safety of the public during actual and potential emergencies. The office coordinates internal communications activities to ensure effective communication of information within the County organization. The office also administers franchises for cable television and open video systems (OVS), responds to complaints and questions from cable and OVS customers, and works with the operators to resolve problems and to ensure that the operators are in compliance with the franchise agreements. It provides administrative support to the Cable Television Advisory Committee. It also produces programming for the government access channel (Channel 2) and posts announcements on the channel's Bulletin Board.

### BUDGET OVERVIEW

#### **FY 07 Issues:**

- As the County population continues to grow, the demand for information is likely to increase.
- The Public Information Office will continue to explore innovative ways of using the website and other technologies to communicate quickly and effectively with the public.
- The web-based Citizen Alert System has helped meet the demand for timely information in certain categories.
- While the County disseminates a large number of press releases every year, it is in increasing competition with other government agencies and nonprofit organizations for free newspaper space and airplay.
- Negotiations on a franchise agreement with Verizon, renewal of a franchise with Adelphia and the pending transfer of Adelphia's franchise to Comcast are all expected to be complete by early FY 07. The Public Information Office will be responsible for administering the new cable television franchises with Verizon and, eventually, Comcast.
- The Public Information Office has taken over from the cable operator the responsibility for programming the government access channel bulletin board and replays of the videotaped Board of Supervisors meetings. This will continue in FY 07.

#### **FY 07 Challenges:**

- The public increasingly expects that timely information will be available 24/7 on the County website. Expectations of the public increase the need to quickly process and disseminate a large amount of information in a short period of time. These demands will be especially pronounced in the event of an emergency or crisis situation.
- With a growing focus on emergency preparedness, it is expected that the Public Information Office staff will see increasing demands for staff training and the creation of emergency preparedness materials.
- In light of the growing Hispanic population in Loudoun County, there will likely be increasing need for the publication of materials in Spanish as well as English, which would impact staff time and translation and printing costs.

<b>Program Financial Summary</b>	<b>FY 03 Actual</b>	<b>FY 04 Actual</b>	<b>FY 05 Actual</b>	<b>FY 06 Adopted</b>	<b>FY 07 Adopted</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>					
Personnel	\$204,521	\$227,126	\$227,455	\$233,000	\$250,000
Operations & Maintenance	146,782	206,204	197,539	233,000	170,000
<b>Total Expenditures:</b>	<b>\$351,303</b>	<b>\$433,330</b>	<b>\$424,994</b>	<b>\$466,000</b>	<b>\$420,000</b>
<b>Revenue</b>					
Local Fees, Charges, etc.	\$99,902	\$155,060	\$200,844	\$231,000	\$184,000
<b>Total Revenues:</b>	<b>\$99,902</b>	<b>\$155,060</b>	<b>\$200,844</b>	<b>\$231,000</b>	<b>\$184,000</b>
<b>Local Tax Funding:</b>	<b>\$251,401</b>	<b>\$278,270</b>	<b>\$224,150</b>	<b>\$235,000</b>	<b>\$236,000</b>
<b>FTE Summary:</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>2.80</b>	<b>2.80</b>

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## Public Information - Public Information/Cable TV

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### Planned Accomplishments/Objectives for FY 07

**Goal:** Increase the number of press releases written, distributed, and placed in the media.

**Objective:** Increase the value of press releases placed in the local media by 5% annually.

<i>Performance Measures</i>	<b>Actual FY 04</b>	<b>Actual FY 05</b>	<b>Est. FY 06</b>	<b>Proj. FY 07</b>
Number of press releases distributed	297	299	300	300
Number of media placements of press releases	1,005	1,267	1,292	1,317
Estimated value of media placements	\$89,972	\$109,504	\$164,000	\$167,000

**Goal:** Continue to build on the Loudoun County Website to make it a primary source of information for residents.

**Objective:** Increase the number of website page views by 10% annually.

<i>Performance Measures</i>	<b>Actual FY 04</b>	<b>Actual FY 05</b>	<b>Est. FY 06</b>	<b>Proj. FY 07</b>
Number of web pages posted	3,788	3,015	2,500	2,500
Number of website "page views"	14.5 M	22.2 M	24.4 M	26.8 M

**Goal:** Increase use of County government access channel to provide more information to subscribers.

**Objective:** Increase number of announcements on the Government Access bulletin board by 10% annually.

<i>Performance Measures</i>	<b>Actual FY 04</b>	<b>Actual FY 05</b>	<b>Est. FY 06</b>	<b>Proj. FY 07</b>
Hours of cable programming produced	5	5	5	5
Number of announcements on Government Access bulletin board	40	108	119	131